

There was no objection.

NATIONAL ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY WEEK

(Mr. ROE of Tennessee asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, today marks the start of National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week, and we must renew our efforts to help ensure every American is literate.

Today, 93 million American adults function below a high school level of literacy, lacking the most basic skills needed to compete in the 21st century economy. The unemployment crisis falls most heavily here—14.3 percent of Americans without a high school diploma are unemployed; among high school graduates with no additional education, the rate drops to 9.6 percent.

By supporting efforts to expand literacy, we can extend a hand to individuals and families across America. Making sure adults can read to their child or understand printed material at work isn't just good for them, it's essential for competing in the global economy.

Learning is a lifelong process. It doesn't stop the day you leave school. So let's renew our efforts to promote adult and family literacy both for the good of families and for the good of the country.

RIISING FOOD PRICES

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the Fed Chairman, Ben Bernanke, said last week when he was giving his speech that we didn't really have to worry about inflation, that the long-term inflation problem would not get beyond 2 percent. So in case Mr. Bernanke or the administration is paying attention, I'd like to read a few facts to them.

The price of milk has gone up 38 percent since last year. The price of sugar is up 20 percent since last year. The price of corn is up 62 percent since last year. As of August, beef prices grew 13 percent, or 52 cents a pound, since last year—the largest increase in the last 7 years. Gasoline is up 35 percent from a year ago, 98 cents a gallon, and the projected inflation rate is much, much higher than the administration or the Fed says is going to occur.

So I hope that we will stop these Keynesian policies, these socialistic policies, these big-spending policies that are killing the American people.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1161

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1161.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

CBC HOUR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. This evening, I am again pleased to join my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus to talk about jobs for this first hour, and we are really pleased that we're going to be led off this night by our Democratic whip, The Honorable STENY HOYER, the person who has led us in the Make It In America agenda.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentlelady for yielding, and I thank her for her leadership.

I want to thank the Congressional Black Caucus, which has raised this issue to a new height of not only visibility but of hope.

EMANUEL CLEAVER, the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, told a wonderful story in our caucus the other day. He said there was a little boy and his dad, and his dad was reading the paper. The little boy scratched his hand, and as he did so, it obviously hurt. He went in front of his dad, shaking his hand. He walked to and from his father, and his father kept reading the paper. Finally, his father put down the paper and said, "Son, I know you scratched your hand, but there's nothing I can do about it."

And the little boy looked at his dad and said, "You can say, 'Ouch.'"

You can understand the pain that I am experiencing. You can understand the pain that losing a job is causing me. You can understand the pain of a home that is lost because the mortgage cannot be paid. You can understand the pain of a family, living in a home, who has seen the value of that most important asset of theirs dwindle and be reduced so that the mortgage payment they're paying is more than the value of the home in which they live.

The Congressional Black Caucus did two things: It said, "We hear and we say, 'Ouch.' We understand the pain you're experiencing. We feel your pain." But if all we do is empathize and feel pain, that's not enough.

□ 1920

Our President addressed us last week, and he said we can shrug our shoulders and say there are 14 months until the next election, but the people in pain can't wait 14 months.

And that's what the Congressional Black Caucus did. Tens of thousands of people showed up throughout this Nation because somebody offered hope, and not just hope but real deliverables. Jobs were gotten; interviews were set up; training sessions for how you apply, how you dress, how you talk to

prospective employers. Those kinds of seminars were given. A difference was made by the Congressional Black Caucus traveling throughout this country.

So I rise to thank the leadership and all the members of the Congressional Black Caucus. I see Mr. DAVIS and Ms. WATERS on the floor with DONNA CHRISTENSEN, and I thank them for their leadership in particular. MAXINE WATERS was an extraordinarily strong voice for saying just that: we feel your pain, and it's not just empathy we're going to give you; we're going to give you the help that we can give.

This President came before us last week and said, ladies and gentlemen, it is time to act. It is time to add to the opportunity for success for putting America back to work, for addressing the mortgage crisis in our country, for putting some more money in the pockets of working men and women in this country, for helping small business grow and expand, making sure as well that we pay for what we buy.

Every commission that has met, the Bowles-Simpson Commission and the Domenici-Rivlin Commission, said, yes, we have to get a handle on this debt and deficit, of which I'm a strong proponent; but in the short term we need to grow the economy because if you do not grow the economy, you will not get the deficit down because you need people working so that they can support themselves and their families and, yes, pay taxes, so that their grandchildren will not be deeply in debt. So I stand indebted to the Congressional Black Caucus for continuing to focus like a laser on creating jobs.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD, another member of the Congressional Black Caucus and leader in our House, the chief deputy whip, is here as well and will be speaking so that in North Carolina and in America we can create jobs, invest in growing our economy, and, yes, give confidence, give confidence to every single individual, every family, and, yes, every business—small, medium, and large; that this Congress will act responsibly to address a challenge, to address the pain that our people are feeling, and to make sure in the long term, as we did in the 1990s, that our country is on a sound fiscal path leading to growth in the economy, jobs for our people, and a stronger and healthier America.

So I am pleased to join the Congressional Black Caucus, thanking them, congratulating them, and saying that I look forward to working with them, not just today, but today, tomorrow, the next day, and the next week until such time as our people are no longer in the pain they now experience.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, Democratic whip, for joining us, and please come back and join us anytime that we're on the floor. And thank you for reminding everyone that the people of this country just cannot wait 14 months to go back to work to take care of their families.

At this time I would like to yield to Congressman DAVIS from Illinois.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Let me, first of all, thank you, my classmate, DONNA CHRISTENSEN. We got here about the same time, and it seems as though the longer we're here, the more alike we think. So I want to thank you for your leadership.

I also want to commend the Congressional Black Caucus because we have just completed what I will call a very successful tour, a tour where some people were able to actually obtain jobs, where other people were able to renew their faith and hope that out there somewhere waiting for them is a job.

As the minority whip talked about pain and frustration, it reminded me that there are thousands of people in my congressional district who are experiencing that pain just as there are millions across the country.

I dug out an old record of mine the other day. I was going through my collection, and there was a fellow singing a song about getting a job. He says, Every morning about this time, she brings my breakfast to the bed, crying, "Get a job." He says, When I read the paper, I read it through and through, trying to see if there is any work for me to do—get a job.

But he kind of ends by saying, It was difficult to get a job that did not exist. It was difficult to get a job that he couldn't find.

So I was pleased a few nights ago when a job plan was articulated and presented. That's a very simple kind of plan in a sense. I couldn't find much controversy. I couldn't find much that one couldn't buy no matter which side of the aisle they were on, no matter what their political stripes.

I mean, who can argue with rebuilding roads and bridges and highways and giving people the opportunity to just ride on roads that are not bumpy or to ride on streets that are not filled with potholes—meaningful kinds of work that anybody can know is an investment and is not any kind of giveaway?

Who can argue with unemployed teachers getting an opportunity to work? Who can argue with small businesses being able to receive incentives if they hire people who have been unemployed for more than 6 months? Who can argue with that? I don't think anybody that is serious could argue with any of that.

So jobs must be found. Jobs must be had. And I am pleased to join with my colleagues to say that we must turn around that there are no jobs so that the guy can sing, I got a job, I got a job.

Thank you, Congressional Black Caucus.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, DANNY.

This morning I was with the postmasters at their convention, and they're facing some difficulties and are having to downsize. And those are some jobs that we know that you and ELIJAH CUMMINGS, ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, ED TOWNS, and LACY CLAY have been working to protect; and we thank you for that.

At this time I yield to the gentlewoman from California, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS.

□ 1930

Ms. WATERS. Thank you very much, Congresswoman CHRISTENSEN. I would like to thank you for taking this time this evening so that we could focus on this issue of jobs. It's extremely important.

I would like to thank STENY HOYER for coming to the floor to recognize the work that we are doing, to increase job opportunities for people in this country.

The Congressional Black Caucus is to be commended because they heard the cry. They felt the pain of so many people out there who have lost their jobs, who do not know how they are going to pay their mortgages, who do not know how they are going to provide for their families.

So despite the fact that the Congressional Black Caucus organized and introduced over 40 bills dealing with this issue, the Congressional Black Caucus decided to do something more, recognizing, yes, that we have a public policy responsibility, that's why the 40 bills. But beyond that what else could we do?

So the Congressional Black Caucus took to the streets and went out into America and hit five cities: Cleveland, Ohio; Detroit, Michigan; Atlanta, Miami, and then my city of Los Angeles. And what we saw was mind-boggling. Even though we understood that 16.7 percent is a huge number for people to be unemployed, we did not realize the thousands upon thousands of people who really were hurting out there.

They came. They came by the thousands in every city that we were in. They were young, they were middle-aged, they were the unemployed, they were people who had been looking for jobs for over a year. And it was awfully painful to see all of these young college graduates who happened to be African American, who went to school, graduated, and looked forward to going to their job, who had no jobs. And so we saw it firsthand.

In my own city of Los Angeles where we organized one of these job fairs, there were over 10,000 people who showed up. Luckily, we had a venue, the Crenshaw Christian Center, where they had a dome, a faith dome. They could hold 10,000 people, and people didn't have to stand in line.

In Atlanta people got ill standing in line 3, 4 hours trying to get connected. The employers are to be commended. They came and they listened, they interviewed, they took applications, they assisted people in learning how to get an opportunity with their companies. We would like to thank all of those employers who participated with the Congressional Black Caucus in trying to help connect people with jobs.

We have to continue with this push for jobs. The press has done a rel-

atively good job of shining a light on the devastation that's going on in these African American communities. We support all people getting an opportunity for jobs, but we must target our resources to those communities that are most in need.

We are talking about rural communities where there's unemployment and poverty, and we are talking about these urban areas. We believe that the resources must be targeted, the attention must be paid, not only to the entire population in this country of unemployed, but those areas that are absolutely suffering.

We need to continue to do this. And while the white unemployment rate stayed the same last month, black unemployment increased by 4 percentage points to 16.7 percent. Today in The Wall Street Journal they noted that black teenage unemployment is bordering on 50 percent. Fifty percent.

These figures don't even take into account the discouraged workers, involuntary part-time workers, and underemployed workers. Moreover, let me just tell you about the wealth gap. It is at its largest levels in more than a generation.

The median wealth of white households is 20 times that of black households and 18 times that of Hispanic households, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of newly available government data from 2009.

These lop-sided wealth ratios are the largest since the government began publishing such data in 1984 and roughly twice the size of the ratios that had prevailed between these three groups for the two decades prior to the Great Recession that supposedly ended in 2009.

The median wealth of white U.S. households in 2009 was \$113,149 compared to \$5,677 for blacks and \$6,325 for Hispanics.

The percentage of African Americans with no wealth has increased. About 35 percent of black households and 31 percent of Hispanic households had zero or negative net worth in 2009, compared with 15 percent of white households.

So while unemployment and the housing crisis is impacting everyone, it is hitting minority communities the hardest. That is why we must continue to push. I am so pleased that the President presented a huge opportunity to focus on job creation, and so now the devil is in the details.

It must be targeted. The public policies must take into consideration targeting these efforts so that these resources are put where its most needed. The Congress must have hearings and markups for the American JOBS Act. We must work together to ensure that its stimulative investments are protected and strengthened through greater targeting.

Our entire jobs-creation agenda can't simply be the tax cuts alone. We need to focus infrastructure repair in the communities with the bridges, roads and sewer systems that are most in need.

We need to rebuild schools in urban and rural areas that have long been neglected.

We want housing, a national housing trust fund to produce, rehabilitate, preserve, and operate rental housing in areas where our homeless veterans and seniors are concentrated.

We need targeted aid to the unemployed, who are the most likely to spend their money and stimulate the economy. If we do not pursue targeted public policy, I predict that the African American unemployment will hit 20 percent. The American economy will never be stable if we have one segment of our population, particularly a segment as large as the African American population, that faces a systemic jobs crisis.

So, again, my appreciation and my thanks to our chairman, EMANUEL CLEAVER, and to the entire Congressional Black Caucus for having the courage to step up and make this a priority issue, not only for our caucus but for their Congress and for their country. We cannot sit idly by in silence and watch what is happening as this devastation is continuing in these communities.

Thank you one more time for allowing us to be here this evening.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, Congresswoman WATERS. We want to thank you for your leadership in leading the jobs task force for the CBC and for being such a strong voice for those who are continually being left out and left behind.

At this time I would like to yield to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Let me thank you, Congresswoman CHRISTENSEN, for all of your work, not only here in the House of Representatives, but what you do for the Congressional Black Caucus all across America.

What hasn't come out tonight is you are actually the first vice chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, and you work so hard for all of us and we want to thank you very much. We want to thank you for convening this Special Order tonight. You work so hard to make it happen.

I also want to extend my appreciation to Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, who worked so tirelessly to help make successful the tour that we had a few weeks ago. She and her staff worked so very hard, and I want to publicly thank them for all that they did.

I had intended to go to two of the five events, but because of Hurricane Irene in my district, I did not make it to Los Angeles, but I did go to the first one. I was there in Cleveland with Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE when we had the jobs fair and the town hall meeting, and it made such a powerful impression on me for us to get up that morning and to drive over to the community college and to see thousands of people lined up trying to get an interview for a job.

There was no question about it that these people were sincere, they were

jobless through no fault of their own. Many of them told us that they had been jobless for more than 2 years, and they were standing in line hoping to get an opportunity to be interviewed by some of the fine companies that had come with the jobs in hand.

So I want to encourage us to continue our work. We have so much work to do. The national unemployment now is 9.1 percent and African American unemployment is at least 16.7 percent and probably more. As Congresswoman WATERS said a few moments ago, among African American youth the number now approaches 50 percent, and so we have work to do.

The President has announced a very bold jobs plan that I hope that we can come together on as a Congress, both Democrat and Republican, House and Senate. I hope that we can come together and pass that package, the complete package, in just a few days because the American people are demanding that we do it.

□ 1940

We have a deficit panel that has now begun its work, 12 Members equally divided between Democrats and Republicans, half from the Senate and half from the House; and we are hoping and praying that deficit panel will be able to come together and present bold ideas to this Congress by November 23 so that we can demonstrate to the American people that we are serious about trying to create jobs.

But you know, Congresswoman, we as a Congress cannot do this alone. We as the CBC cannot do this alone. We have got to have shared sacrifice from people all across America, and that includes America's corporations. I have been disturbed over the last few days that America's companies are sitting on more than \$2 trillion in retained earnings, and that is so disappointing.

So when we talk about creating jobs, American corporations have a responsibility, too, to put people to work and to start spending and investing in their own companies. So we go forward now, and we have a lot of work to do. We have a short term, as the minority whip said a few moments ago, and he is absolutely right; and I want to thank STENY HOYER for his willingness to come to the floor tonight and to make the statements that he made. But we must have a short-term solution and a long-term solution. In the short term, we have to create jobs and we have to grow the economy. We have got to help businesses innovate, and we've got to improve the infrastructure so we can start getting more revenue from American workers. And, hopefully, in the long term we can begin to pay down the deficit.

So thank you for allowing me to come to the floor tonight and thank you for your leadership, and I thank the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus who works tirelessly. I don't know when he goes to Kansas City. He is from Kansas City, Missouri,

and a good friend of all of ours. I don't know when he rests. He is our tireless leader. I understand that he may be next in the queue to speak, and I will eagerly await the statements from our chairman.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, Congressman BUTTERFIELD, and thank you for pointing out the fact that America's corporations are sitting on billions of dollars. They have an obligation. As I understand it, they claim there is uncertainty, and so they are holding onto their funds. But there can't be any more uncertainty in our corporations than in the families around this country who are hurting because they need a job.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Without question.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you again, Congressman BUTTERFIELD, for joining us. At this time, it is my pleasure to yield to the leader of our Congressional Black Caucus, Reverend EMANUEL CLEAVER. And thank you so much for your work and reminding this Congress and this country on the importance of job creation for America's families and for leading us on that tour over the August recess.

Mr. CLEAVER. I thank the vice chair of the CBC. And to follow Congressman G.K. BUTTERFIELD, who I think hit on all of the proper and necessary areas of concerns, it has been written that ours will be the last generation in this country to experience surpassing the previous generation, that our children will not achieve what we have achieved and the jobs are not there. And while the individuals who have written about this and presented research on it are certainly brilliant and wise, I will gently rebuke them and disagree with their prediction.

I am not in any way willing to accept the fact, the fatalism, that the United States will inevitably fall to number two in the world behind China. Yesterday there was a news story that said at best there will be two superpowers equal in terms of influence and their economies: China and the United States.

This Nation that placed men on the Moon, this Nation that creates a new technology almost hourly should never surrender its place in the world to any other nation. And, further, I don't think that it is in our best interest to even give a hint that we believe that we can't continue to create jobs for the next generation.

The jobs tour that we had during the month of August was eye-opening and Earth-shattering. When we walked from our cars inside the Cleveland State University place where we held the jobs fair, there were people who had been in line since 5 a.m. that morning. And so it always troubles me to hear people say, and say baselessly: Well, you know, some people don't want to work. So 5 a.m. in the morning, standing in line. And at best, of the 5,000 or 6,000 people who were there, we only had about 2,000 jobs. But people stood patiently in line.

One of the things that happened that I think some of you may already know about who are in the CBC, an Anglo gentleman, and there were people from every race in every city, but this particular gentleman caught my attention because he said: Look, I listen to black radio. He said, I just like R&B and I heard about the jobs fair and I thought I'd come over since I'm unemployed. And he said, Is it all right? And of course our position is, has been, and shall always be, one of including everybody, particularly in a time of crisis. But even if we're not, that is what we would want. And so he remained in line. I'm not sure what happened, whether he was one of the successful applicants or not.

The point I want to make is that the pain that is being experienced in this Nation is not just being experienced by African Americans. It is true that our numbers are higher, but our numbers are higher for a variety of reasons. Number one, African Americans historically have tried or sought employment in government. One of the reasons Washington, D.C. is predominantly black is because African Americans from the South came to Washington by the tens of thousands because it was believed that if you could get to the capital of the United States, you would experience far less bigotry and discrimination. And so by the thousands they came to Washington.

The same thing holds true with government. African Americans have sought employment with State, local, and the Federal Government. So every time people read in the paper or cheer that some State laid off 200 or 300 people, they need to understand that those are 200 or 300 real human beings, and chances are also great that they are disproportionately minority. So that is one of the reasons why our numbers are swelling like they are.

But also I think we have got to realize that there are some other factors through no fault of people who are unemployed. I served as mayor of Kansas City, Missouri, from 1991 until 1999, two terms, 8 years. One of the things we always had to fight was expanding. Urban sprawl is what it is called sociologically. Kansas City is a city that stretches 322 square miles. To show you how large that is, you can place the entire city of San Francisco inside the city limits of Kansas City 30 times, or the city of Washington, I think it is like 42 times. It is a huge city.

Now while many politicians brag about that, the truth of the matter is we stretched out our resources. One of the things I learned during the jobs fairs—we started out in Cleveland, went to Detroit; left Detroit and went to Atlanta; left Atlanta and went to Miami; left Miami and went to Los Angeles—and there is one thing that was present at all of those that this Congress needs to deal with and it is this: the jobs that were brought to our fairs were not new jobs. The truth of the matter is they were jobs that already

existed except they were in the suburbs.

And so as the cities have expanded, the jobs have moved to the suburbs. And so we cannot speak of creating jobs without dealing with the issue of transportation. There's an inextricable connection between jobs and transportation: how do you get people in the highest unemployment areas to the areas where the jobs are.

□ 1950

For those who live on the eastern seaboard, you have a little better situation because you have, as we do in Washington, the Metro. But when you start moving toward the western part of the United States, or the Caribbean, there is no mass transportation that is as effective as it is on the east coast. Therefore, if jobs are in suburban Kansas City and people who live in the urban area are unemployed and do not have a car and do not have any way of getting to the jobs, there is no way they can get there. Remember, Kansas City is a city of 322 square miles, which means that people could need to go essentially 30, 40, 50 miles to get a job.

Now, let me also say that nothing has been discussed thus far dealing with transportation. The jobs bill is seeking to have what I think most of us would support, which would be some kind of transportation bank where it would end up that the government would put money in and hopefully the private sector would come in and we would be able to get these infrastructure jobs going. But the amount of money that is being discussed is woefully inadequate, and there's probably little chance that we're going to be able to create any new mass transit programs in the country. In fact, UMTA, the Urban Mass Transit Administration, is broke virtually broke. So there's very little in the way of help coming forth.

Now, there's some politics involved, and we're all in the political environment. And the people at home may not even understand what's going on.

Tragically, I have watched our country move to a state where people are constantly angry. They're being told to hate their government, and then both sides of the aisle use inappropriate language to discuss things with the other side of the aisle. It's continuing to ratchet up, and it's getting worse and worse. And the people around the country are not only participating in it, they are encouraging it.

This is the United States of America. My hope and my dream is that this Nation will be around for my children and my grandchildren. But I'm telling you that what our children are seeing is not a pleasant sight because they are looking at a Nation that is becoming more and more divided. You can't look at television or radio without this constant attack, attack, attack, and it's just sickening to see this.

As we're moving into an election cycle, we're going to see "thermal nu-

clear" campaigns. And the American public needs to come to grips with the fact that if people will run a nasty campaign where all they do is attack, chances are when they come to Congress they're going to do the same thing. And the more we bring people in here who come for the sole purpose of fighting against the other side, the less business we're going to take care of for the people of this country.

I said last week there are some people who'd like to defeat the President of the United States. Fine. Campaign against him. Get your spouse, your children, your grandchildren, your friends, and everybody. Vote against him. If you can vote twice, vote twice. Do everything you can to defeat the President. But right now, vote for the American public. Fight him later. Vote now for the American public.

And the American public is in trouble. We've got to create opportunities for jobs to grow and develop or we're going to find ourselves faced with a new normal, a new normal where unemployment is considered normal at 8 percent rather than 3.5 percent, which is what our predecessors decided that we're going to keep unemployment at, 3.5 percent. So we can't allow this to happen. I think we've got to fight against it. But, more than that, what we've got to do is quit fighting each other. Nothing is going to happen worth anything if we're fighting each other.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CLEAVER. I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. CLEAVER, you brought up the subject of infrastructure in your remarks. That's a very important conversation that we've got to have in this country. You have served 8 years as mayor of a major city. Would you again speak to the importance of infrastructure and what it can mean to job creation and economic development in communities all across America?

I'm from a rural community. I have 88 small cities and towns in my district and they don't have access to money to build infrastructure. The infrastructure bank that you made reference to would just bring new life to rural communities. I know you served as a mayor. Just talk about the relationship between infrastructure and job creation.

Mr. CLEAVER. What is generally said is that you get, four to one, jobs to money spent if we do infrastructure projects, and those jobs are long lasting.

Now, most of the infrastructure in this country is in decrepit condition. Most of the storm water sewers, wastewater sewers in cities around the country are over a century old. Roads are collapsing. Our bridges are collapsing. We saw in Minnesota 2 years ago what happens when we neglect our own infrastructure.

And the worst thing about it, Congressman BUTTERFIELD, is that we're

building roads and bridges right now in Iraq, new roads and bridges and schools in Iraq right now. I'm just a dumb Methodist preacher, but something doesn't add up. We're doing all of this in Iraq and our roads are crumbling?

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. And we have American workers ready to do the work if we can create the opportunities.

Mr. CLEAVER. And we can with the infrastructure bank. But we've got to put enough money in the bank to attract the private sector dollars. And that's a part of the President's plan, and hopefully people will buy into it. But I don't think we have a lot of time to waste. Americans are sitting around now hoping, many of them even praying, that we will do something to help them out of the economic doldrums in which they find themselves.

So, I appreciate the opportunity to come and share tonight in this discussion because I think people around the country who are watching this need to know at least there are some people in Washington who are looking out for their best interests. And I think, based on what we're doing, we are part of it. I'm not going to suggest that other folks are not interested in helping folks. They are. I'm saying that sometimes, maybe even unintentionally, we allow political ideology to trump anything and everything else, and at some point we ought to be more Americans than we are Democrats or Republicans.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, Chairman CLEAVER, and thank you for the perspective that you always bring to these discussions, helping us to focus on the important issues, sometimes the underlying issues that often get overlooked.

Yesterday and today, we've taken time out of our daily routine to remember the over 3,000 people who went to work on a bright, sunny morning and whose lives were snuffed out in three dastardly acts of terrorism. We remember and honor them and their families and the first responders who returned to help and also met their death on September 11, 2001. We pay tribute also to the men and women of our Armed Forces who lost their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan, continuing our fight against al Qaeda and other terrorist groups, and those who are still there protecting us and the world from attack.

Today, I had the honor of addressing our postmasters at their annual convention and remembered Thomas Morris, Jr., and Joseph Curseen, who died after being exposed to anthrax sent in the mail in the weeks after as they worked at the Brentwood postal facility here in Washington. We didn't look at those who died or talk about those who died as Republicans or as Democrats or Independents. They were workers in both the public and private sector, who some groups today are trying to pit against each other. We honor them all and their families for their sacrifice.

Tonight, we've been focusing on the workers that remain with us, but most especially we are singling out for our attention—to the attention of this Congress and for all Americans—those who have no job and for whom, until now, it had appeared as though there would be no legislation to come to their aid. But thanks to our great President, there's now a bill before us, and we're calling on both bodies to pass it as soon as possible and without taking it apart. The 1.9 million jobs and the 2 percent economic growth projections are dependent on those two things—that we pass it promptly and that we pass it intact.

Most importantly, as President Obama said, and all of us know, the American people cannot wait 14 months until after the next election. They have already been hurting too long and they need those jobs. They need our help today.

□ 2000

As you heard, the Congressional Black Caucus did not wait either. We felt the pain and anxieties in our communities and communities across the country and used our August recess to partner with the private sector and some government agencies to bring jobs that are needed so desperately into our communities now. People of all ages, all educational backgrounds and levels came out in the thousands everywhere that held those job fairs.

Mr. Speaker, the people of this country are crying out to us to put them back to work, to allow them to make it in America and to be able to take care of their families and our Nation once again. Sure, there are things in the President's draft bill that some of us are not particularly fond of that we're willing to accept for the integrity of the entire package and for the good of our country. And others, like Social Security and Medicare, we accept the President's goals and hope that we can work with him to achieve them through any alternative measures wherever our approaches might differ.

The ladies in the markets in the Caribbean at home in the Virgin Islands used to what we call "marry" different fruits and vegetables for sale. You had to buy the two of them, whether it was limes and peppers or yams and okra, you had to buy the two; the vegetables were married. The purpose of that, of course, was to get everything sold by tying something everyone wanted to something that might not be as popular. Now I know that was not our President's approach, but he did put together a package that could best appeal to us so that we could all come together and buy it as a package. And so, Mr. Speaker, and colleagues, that is exactly what we should and must do.

Creating jobs and stimulating our economy is critical not just to our present, but to our future. This is not an issue that's about the President, and it ought not to be about the next election. Neither is it about the CBC or

Members of Congress, or about Republicans or Democrats or Independents. It's about the welfare and the well-being of the American people and of our country, which I know all of us care about.

We are in a crisis. In crises, people always come together to the aid of each other, as we did on 9/11/01 and in the weeks and months after. So it's our hope and prayer that this Congress can do the same thing now.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I yield back the balance of our time.

GOP JOBS OFFENSIVE: ROLLING BACK JOB-KILLING REGULATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, last week we were here talking about jobs. This week, we need to talk about jobs again because, quite honestly, the problem the United States has is we have to get our people back to work.

These fine folks who just had the hour before us, they were talking about jobs, talking about the ability to get a job. I thought it was an interesting discussion. We are all concerned about jobs, and we all have different views of how this should be done.

The President laid out a broad agenda for another stimulus bill that he believes will cause us to have new jobs. He's going to deliver that I think today in writing so we can all sit down and look at it and analyze just exactly what it actually says so we can figure out how much of that will create jobs, and if there is a disagreement, we will at least know what we disagree with.

But the bottom line is there are some things that are basic. People take their money and they invest their money when they feel like, A, it's going to make them money, and B, they can feel relatively safe that the future that they envision is the future that's going to actually happen. You've got to look down the road in any organization and get yourself a perspective of just what it takes to make your business or your operation thrive and go forward. And there are some basic things you want to know. You want to know, basically—let's say you're doing a 5-year plan. Over the next 5 years, there are some simple things you would like to know: What are my taxes; what taxes am I going to have to pay on my business? What regulations are going to affect my business, and are they going to change? What is the source of money to borrow or invest in my business if I want to expand? Let's say I want to put a new assembly line in my factory, or I need a new building for my business to grow and put my employees in. Am I going to be able to finance that building? Am I going to be able to come up with the mortgage money to be able to do that? Can I envision a pathway to